THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Although there may be some apprehensions regarding the impact of economic reforms on the different sectors of the economy, these do not appear to be well-founded on factual evidence. The economic reforms initiated in the last few years have had a favourable impact in terms of acceleration in overall growth of the economy, build up of a comfortable foreign exchange reserve position, lower rate of inflation and substantial flow of foreign capital. However, despite these achievements, the challenge to overcome the deep-seated problem of poverty remains a daunting one and the government recognises that our reforms must be guided by campassion and justice. The Budget for 2000-2001 has proposed to put the economy on a sustained, equitable and job creating growth path of 7 to 8 per cent per year in order to banish poverty within a decade and has accorded highest priority to strengthening the rural economy and to human resource development to achieve this objective.

Study on Corporatisation of Ports

*179. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the ports suitable for corporatisation as revealed on a study conducted by Cornell Consultants;

(b) the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the port which will be first corporatised and by when?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH): (a) and (b) The Cornell Group appointed by the Asian Development Bank, is yet to submit its Final Report.

(c) A decision has been taken to corporatise the Major Ports in a phased manner starting with the new Port at Ennore and followed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Haldia Ports. No time frame has been fixed for completion of the process.

Storage of rain water

†*180. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the requirement of water in the country can be fulfilled by the utilization of rain water by storing it;

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.